

China's Strategic Objectives in a Post
COVID-19 World

中共在後新冠肺炎世界的戰略目標

譯者簡介



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Preface

前言

On 1 October 2019, the People's Republic of China (PRC) celebrated its 70th birthday, thus marking another important landmark of modern China under the leadership of the

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Chinese Communist Party (CCP). In commemorating the event, the Chinese government held a grand military parade with some 15,000 troops, more than 160 aircraft, and 580 active weapon systems during the event, including the latest generation nuclear missile systems, such as the Dongfeng-41 mobile intercontinental ballistic missile. As the South China Morning Post reported, citing one insider, "the parade, which aims to showcase President Xi's achievement in military modernization and reforms in both hardware and software will carry a lot of political meaning."² Given ongoing social protests in Hong Kong and problems in western societies at that time, such as Brexit talks in the UK and political opposition to President Trump in the United States, the contrast could not have been more stark: A powerful and prosperous China celebrates its international success while many western societies fail and flounder amidst their own domestic problems.

2019年10月1日，中華人民共和國歡慶建國70周年，這標誌著現代化的中國大陸在共產黨領導下達到另一個重要的里程碑。中共慶祝大會的重頭戲之一就是舉行盛大的閱兵典禮，計有1萬5,000名參演官兵、超過160架飛機及580項現役武器裝備，其中最引人注目的是新一代核子飛彈系統——東風41型機動式洲際彈道導彈車。《南華早報》報導引述某位內部人士所言：「該閱兵典禮旨在展現習近平總書記在軍事現代化與改革的軟硬體成就，同時也帶來許多政治意涵。」² 鑒於香港持續的社會抗爭活動以及此時西方國家自己本身也出了問題，如英國脫歐談判、美國出現反川普的政治勢力，相形之下更凸顯出反差：一個強大繁榮的中國大陸在慶祝國際級成就，反觀西方國家卻為自己國內各項問題所苦。

In the end of 2019, it would seem that the COVID-19 pandemic has levelled the international mood as far as countries are able to claim unmitigated political success. Even China, despite some success in containing the virus, was careful about portraying a celebratory front in its battle against the virus. Speaking at the National People's Congress, Premier Li Keqiang noted that, "the epidemic has not yet come to an end, while the tasks we face in promoting development are immense."³ At the same time, the fact that the Chinese government had spared no efforts to narrate its road to success in curbing the virus is particularly telling: China seeks to demonstrate that its brand of governance is superior to that of the West, and consequently, it deserves a greater say in

2 Chan, Minnie. "China says national day military parade won't disappoint in scale or advanced weapons," South China Morning Post, September 24, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3030206/china-says-national-day-military-parade-wont-disappoint-scale> (retrieved June 10, 2020).

3 "Full text: Premier Li's speech at the third session of the 13th NPC," <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-05-22/Full-text-Premier-Li-s-speech-at-the-third-session-of-the-13th-NPC-QHaP1FpB8k/index.html> (retrieved June 10, 2020).

and political influence over international affairs.

在2019年底新冠肺炎爆發後不久，世界各國無一不想宣稱自己在疫情管控上的政治成就，中共當然也不例外，縱使其在防堵病毒上有些許成就後，仍很小心的宣揚其抗疫的成果。儘管總理李克強在全國人大會議上指出：「當前疫情尚未結束，今年經濟社會發展任務異常艱鉅。」³不過北京當局還是不遺餘力訴說其成功管控疫情，意在對外界傳達中國大陸的治理方式優於西方民主國家，中國理應享有更大發言權和政治影響力。

From this vantage point, I argue that a post COVID-19 global landscape is likely to witness greater intransigence, or hardening of Beijing's political resolve in pursuing its national interests. In addition, given the backlash and criticism it received from some western countries, particularly the United States over its handling of the pandemic, it has generated a siege mentality among Chinese leaders, many of whom perceive an existential struggle between Beijing and Washington with the latter seen as attempting to thwart China's rise and inhibit its international influence. This article seeks to further expand on these political motifs and how they reflect China's strategic objectives over the past six years under the leadership of President Xi. Indeed, the issue of what the PRC's long-term intentions are, and elements of its grand strategy are crucial for scholars and policymakers seeking to make sense of China's international behavior. To this end, a number of important works have emerged in the past few years providing useful clues as to what Beijing's ultimate objectives might be.⁴

從上述觀點而言，本文認為後新冠肺炎的世界，將見證中共為了追求國家利益而展現更為頑固的政治決心。此外，由於中共處置疫情慢半拍，使得一些西方國家，尤其是美國對其猛烈批評，這讓中共領導階層存在他人對己存有敵意的「自以為是的心態」，其中許多人甚至認為北京與華盛頓之間所進行的鬥爭，是美國為了要阻止中共崛起並抑制其國際影響力。習近平主政下，本文試圖對中共這種政治認知做進一步說明，並指出其如何反映中共過去6年來的戰略目標。對於一些學者與決策者而言，理解中共長期意圖與大戰略的組成要素至關重要，因為這是探討中共國際行為的依據。過去幾年來一些有用的文獻線索，可幫助我們有效判斷中共未來意圖。⁴

This article seeks to complement the existing works by incorporating the events of the COVID-19 pandemic so as to obtain a more realistic appraisal of China. This is important for two main reasons; one, prior to COVID-19, it can be said that China under President Xi had not faced a

4 相關案例，參見Brown, Kerry. *China's Dream: the Culture of Chinese Communism and the Secret Sources of Its Power*. Cambridge: Polity, 2018; Shambaugh, David L. *China's Future*. Cambridge: Polity, 2016; Gore, Lance, and Zheng Yongnian. *China Entering the Xi Jinping Era*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2015。



crisis of such magnitude and it was thus difficult to assess the extent to which the CCP could claim political legitimacy by virtue of its ability to govern China. Secondly, given worsening Sino-U.S. relations possibly at their historical lowest since the Mao-Nixon rapprochement in 1972, the stakes for Beijing's international diplomacy and claim to international political leadership could not have been greater. As Harvard's Graham Allison observed recently, Sino-U.S. relations look set to worsen and the endgame is a "lose-lose" situation.⁵ With this backdrop, will China's strategic objectives evince greater change or continuity with the past? How will the COVID-19 pandemic and worsening relations with the United States affect China's foreign policy calculations, and more broadly, its role and place in the world? And what kind of changes will we see within China even as the CCP continues to insist that its brand of governance remains superior to western liberal democracy?

本文是在既有研究基礎下，納入新冠肺炎疫情事件，希冀能發現中共更真實一面，之所以重要有兩個主要原因：(一)在新冠肺炎爆發之前，中共在習近平領導下並未面臨如此重大的危機，因此要衡量共黨所宣稱的政治合法性及其治理能力是困難的；(二)鑒於美、「中」關係惡化，應該是1972年尼克森訪問中國大陸後兩國和解以來的歷史新高，這讓北京當局的國際外交處於危急之秋，無法進一步提升國際政治領導地位。誠如哈佛大學教授雷厄姆·艾利森近期觀察，美、「中」關係每況愈下結果將是雙輸局面。⁵在此一背景下，中共戰略目標會發生重大改變或是延續以往模式？新冠肺炎疫情與美、「中」關係惡化將如何影響中共的外交政策算計，是否進一步影響其在世界的角色與地位？當中共持續堅持其治理方式優於西方民主自由體制時，中共內部到底發生哪些改變？這些是本文欲探討之部分。

The rest of this article will proceed as follows; I will examine five major themes that have constituted important strategic objectives under President Xi. I will then attempt to relate these objectives to the events of COVID-19 and the worsening relationship with the United States. As the article will show, the COVID-19 pandemic has emboldened the Chinese government to consider a model of "liberalism abroad and illiberalism at home" as a means to succeed in world politics. Such an approach allows the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to both ensure that it remains unchallenged politically at home, while at the same time proffering it the opportunity to promote a foreign policy agenda which allows it to maximize its international gains while minimizing domestic risks. Finally, I conclude that these strategic imperatives dogmatically pursued by the

5 Lee, Yen Nee. "Endgame of U.S.-China rivalry is lose-lose, says Harvard professor," CNBC, May 26, 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/26/endgame-of-uschina-rivalry-is-lose-lose-says-harvard-professor.html> (retrieved June 10, 2020).

Chinese government are likely to exacerbate tensions not just between China and the United States, but also between China and countries within its neighborhood, particularly in East and Southeast Asia.

本文研究架構區分5個主題來分析習近平主政下的戰略目標，各主題內容也與新冠肺炎疫情以及惡化的美、「中」關係進行連結。本文認為新冠肺炎疫情讓中共思考一個「在海外採自由主義，在國內採不自由主義」的治理模式，以能成功立足於世界政治舞臺，因為這種方式不但能確保其國內政治不受挑戰，而且也有機會推行外交政策，進而在最大化其國際利益的同時，讓國內風險達到最小化。最後，本文提出中共若仍持續武斷追求這些戰略倡議，不但會使美、「中」關係更為惡化，同時其與東亞與東南亞鄰國的關係也將每況愈下。

Chinese Strategic Objectives Under Xi Jinping 習近平主政下的戰略目標

Ensuring CCP Legitimacy

一、確保共黨合法性

The first, and possibly the most crucial, is the need to ensure the legitimacy of the CCP to rule China. Given Chinese leaders' criticism of western democratic systems and the problems they generate, it is incumbent upon Beijing to demonstrate that its single party, authoritarian approach to governance is superior to the West. This is easier said than done given that the party consists of more than 80 million members who are far from monolithic in their ideological worldviews and political affiliations. While Xi's centralization of political power over the last few years has greatly reduced the likelihood of political opponents challenging him for power, factional politics continue to be a mainstay of the CCP's politics, and represent a grave concern to the party.⁶

如何確保共黨統治的合法性，不僅是首要也可能是最關鍵的工作。中共領導人往往對西方民主體制進行批評，意在凸顯「一黨專制」治理方式優於西方國家；然而，由於共黨成員超過8千萬人，各有其意識形態與歸屬不同政治派系，內部治理私底下也時常出現分歧。過去幾年來，在習近平集政治權力於一身後，已經大幅減低政治敵手挑戰其權力地位的可能性，派系政治雖然仍是共黨的政治主體，但未來將形成一個隱憂。⁶

6 關於中共派系政治的研究文獻，參見Li, Cheng. *Chinese Politics in the Xi Jinping Era: Reassessing Collective Leadership*. Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2016; Huang, Jing. *Factionalism in Chinese Communist Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000。



Given the opaque character of Chinese policymaking, it is difficult to assess the precise extent to which factions within the CCP have influenced current Chinese politics. Nevertheless, there are two issues worth watching; one, the views of Chinese elites towards President Trump; and two, the amount of support for President Xi following the COVID-19 pandemic. The former relates to a key strategic aspect of Sino-U.S. relations, while the latter is intimately tied to domestic conditions, such as economic growth, the availability of jobs, and the overall mood in the country. According to a recent study by Yao Lin, many Chinese liberal intellectuals fervently idolize Donald Trump and embrace the alt-right ideologies that are espoused.⁷ Interestingly, many of these liberal intellectuals are deeply critical of the Party-state and are committed to advocating universal values and China's liberal democratization, themes which are not usually synonymous with Trump's brand of nationalistic, American-first hubristic politics.⁸ As observed, the "traumatizing experience of Party-State totalitarianism propels Chinese liberals on an anti-CCP pilgrimage in search for sanitized and glorified imageries of western, especially American political realities, which nurtures both their neoliberal affinity and their proclivity for a Trumpian metamorphosis."⁹

由於中共政治決策不透明，確實難以判斷共黨內部派系何者對執行政策具實際影響力，因而可藉關注以下兩項議題來進行分析：一是中共菁英階層對美國川普總統的觀點，這是美「中」關係發展的一個重要的戰略面向；另一個可觀察面向是是習近平在中國新冠肺炎疫情期間之民眾支持度的變化，而此種支持度通常受經濟成長率、就業機會及國家發展整體氛圍等因素影響。根據學者林垚近期研究指出，大部分中共自由派的知識分子極度推崇美國川普總統並擁護渠所謂的「另類右派觀點」。⁷

有趣的是，此同一批的中國自由派人士卻因此凸顯出本身的矛盾，渠等雖強烈批評中共黨政一體體制，支持普世價值的西方民主自由，卻又支持了以川普作為代表性政治人物的另類右派觀點下之國家主義與美國優先政策。⁸也因此中共自由派反共黨專政人士們因中共黨國集權體制創傷記憶，進而盲目追求新自由主義風潮與受川普暨川粉們民粹政治現象影響，讓中國民主發展更堅定地以新自由派體系思維，追隨川普式民粹政治發展而使其民主方向變質。⁹

Notwithstanding the problems in American and more generally western political life, the above study suggests a growing chorus of Chinese intellectuals who are disillusioned with China's political life and are learning from the West (even as an ideal) with which to find

7 Lin, Yao. "Beaconism and the Trumpian Metomorphosis of Chinese Liberal Thinkers," *Journal of Contemporary China* (published May 18, 2020), DOI: 10.1080/10670564.2020.1766911.

8 Ibid., 2.

9 Ibid., 4.

solutions for the perceived problems in domestic life. While China's ongoing spat with the United States continues to generate hawkish voices from Beijing, including an aggressive Wolf Warrior diplomacy, it has also paradoxically resulted in a greater affinity for western values and ideals, and regards them as a panacea for the social maladies experienced at home.

儘管美國(或西方國家)政治生態有其問題，但上述研究凸顯越來越多的中共知識分子對於中共政治不抱任何期待，開始向西方國家學習以找出解決國內問題的方法。然而，中共持續與美國之交惡，不僅造成中共鷹派勢力的抬頭，如具挑釁性的戰狼外交，而且也產生一種矛盾現象，如對西方價值觀與理念有更大的認同感，因為看見它們曾是西方社會問題的解方。

Similarly, this growing domestic discontent has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the perceived mistakes made by the CCP in its bungling response during the initial outbreak. While large-scale randomized samples of citizens' sentiments are unavailable, there are several clues that suggest that all is not rosy with the CCP internally. For instance, during the height of the virus outbreak in Wuhan, President Xi was replaced by Premier Li Keqiang to lead a taskforce there. While Chinese public opinion over Xi's absence is difficult to gauge because of Chinese censorship, his absence was certainly notable. As Willy Lam puts it, "he has not visited places hard hit by the virus. This has been criticized in part because Xi claims to be the core of the leadership, the all-powerful leadership, but he doesn't have the guts to go the epidemic-stricken areas."¹⁰

隨著新冠肺炎疫情擴大，國內不滿情緒與日俱增。北京當局在疫情爆發之初慢半拍，就已經犯下大錯，儘管欠缺大規模民眾情緒調查資料佐證，以下事件足以說明中共國內民眾想法並非如當局所想像的樂觀。例如，新冠肺炎疫情在武漢爆發的高峰期，國務院總理李克強受習近平委託前往武漢擔任防疫工作領導小組組長，卻不是習近平本人親自上陣。鑒於中共的審查制度，國內大眾對於習的缺席無從得知原因，但他的缺席肯定是引人關注的。誠如林和立教授指出，「習近平為人所詬病之處是他宣稱要成為黨的核心領袖、全能領袖，但卻沒膽量到疫情肆虐的地區。」¹⁰

From the above, I argue that at stake is Xi's personal reputation and his ability to rally the CCP around him to ensure the ongoing legitimacy of the Party to rule China. This can only be so if Chinese leaders are able to evince that its social policies and governance have the support of the majority of the Chinese people. Due to the absence of parliamentary style

10 Kuo, Lily. "Taking credit, avoiding blame?," The Guardian, February 4, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/04/blame-xi-jinping-absence-coronavirus-frontline-china-crisis> (retrieved June 10, 2020).



elections in China, this is difficult to ascertain; hence, material prosperity and economic growth remain central to legitimizing the CCP's political rule. To this end, any slowdown of the Chinese economy would pose a challenge to the mandate of the CCP. At the 13th National People's Congress this year, the Chinese government for the first time did not set a GDP target for the economy with a sign of the Chinese government's reading that the situation inside and outside China could get worse post COVID-19.

本文認為最關鍵的是，習近平個人聲譽以及是否有能力凝聚黨的向心力，因為這涉及共黨統治中國大陸的合法性，為達此一目的，中共領導階層須使社會政策與治理方式，獲得大多數人民之支持。由於缺少議會體制的選舉模式，也就難以判斷其支持度如何，因此物質性的繁榮景象與經濟成長率仍是中共政治統治合法性的根本。由此可見，只要在經濟上一有任何衰退，就將對中共政權構成挑戰，這是為何北京當局在2020年第十三屆全國人代會，首次未訂出國內生產總值的經濟目標，同時中共認為在新冠肺炎後國內外復甦不樂觀。

Widening the International Support Base

二、擴大國際支持度

Under President Xi, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has been a central feature of Beijing's foreign policy. While a number of elements regarding the BRI remain unclear, particularly the economic viability and sustainability of BRI projects with other countries, one objective is certain; the BRI is conceived with the intention of widening China's international support base through economic statecraft. In this respect some modest progress has been made. The first BRI forum in May 2017 saw 29 foreign heads of state and representatives from 130 countries, while the second BRI forum in April 2019 saw an increase to 37 foreign heads of state and participation from more than 150 countries. What these numbers suggest is that China has been generally successful in using its economic statecraft to promote its political objectives. According to Baldwin, economic measures are particularly useful in helping states gain political influence for they are "likely to exert more pressure than either diplomacy or propaganda, and are less likely to evoke a violent response than military instruments."¹¹ Seen this way, if we take economic relations between states, not as a dispassionate realm of economic activity (concerned purely with profit) but as a derivative of wider geopolitical interests and calculations, then the political character of economic statecraft cannot be ignored.

在習近平主政下，一帶一路倡議已成為中共外交政策的主軸之一。雖然一帶一路某些細節仍不得而知，尤其是在經濟上的可行性以及與他國在各計畫上的持續性，但是有

11 Baldwin, David A. *Economic Statecraft*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985, p.110.

一個目標是確定的，意即一帶一路是中共意圖運用經濟手段來擴大其國際支持度。就此方面而言，中共已獲得一些進展，如在2017年5月「第一屆一帶一路國際合作高峰論壇」，其中有29個國家元首以及130個國家代表與會，第二屆的論壇參與人員則增加為37個國家元首以及超過150個國家，就參與國數量增加的趨勢顯示，中共已成功利用其經濟手段來促成政治目標。誠如資深政治家鮑德溫所言，「經濟措施特別有助於國家獲得政治影響力，因為其不僅能比外交或宣傳造成更大壓力，而且也能避免在運用軍事手段時所引起的暴力回應。」¹¹ 從此面向而言，國家之間的經濟關係(純粹以利益考量的經濟活動)可以將之視為地緣政治利益與算計之更廣泛延伸，因此以經濟作為國策手段的國家不容小覷。

In the case of China, the Belt and Road Initiative represents a grand strategy through economic means;¹² hence, economic power is seen as a means of generating greater political influence among the countries Beijing seeks to win over into its camp. The goal of economic initiatives, such as the BRI is linked to how Chinese leaders seek to present and project Beijing's worldview to others and to ultimately achieve China's foreign policy and domestic goals. This "selling" of Beijing's worldview is also closely linked to how Chinese soft power is being conceptualized and operationalized. While western iterations of soft power tend to emphasize the non-coercive aspect of soft power, and thus the stress on culture and values as instruments of soft power,¹³ such a distinction as to whether economics ought to be seen as "hard" or "soft power" is less clear cut in China. According to one study, Chinese discourse concerning soft power is frequently expressed within its domestic context and towards domestic objectives, and also involves touting the economic success of China's development model.¹⁴ Such a narrative suggests that in the Chinese mind, economic resources can be used as a source of soft power which allows China to evidence its political model and worldview to the outside world, thus rendering Beijing a model for others to emulate. This suggests that China would likely expend further efforts in the coming years to obtain greater international support for its global initiatives, especially among western countries that possess strong relations with the United States, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada.

12 討論中共大戰略的文獻，參見Friedberg, Aaron L. "Globalisation and Chinese Grand Strategy," *Survival*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (2018): 7-40; Ma, Lian. "Thinking of China's Grand Strategy: Chinese Perspectives," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* Vol. 13, No. 1 (2013): 155-168。

13 本句軟實力的解釋係參照軟實力之父奈伊教授的見解，參見Nye, Joseph S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs, 2004。

14 Li, Mingjiang. "China Debates Soft Power," *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2008): 287-308.



以中共為例，一帶一路倡議代表的是運用經濟手段的大戰略。¹² 因此，經濟力被視為是產生更多政治影響力的手段，這讓中共能成功拉攏其他國家至其陣營。經濟倡議的目標(如一帶一路倡議)反映出中共領導人向其他國家灌輸其世界觀，最終達到外交政策與國內的目標。中共想呈現的這種世界觀，也反映出中共軟實力的概念化與實際作為。西方國家所說的軟實力傾向強調非威懾面向的軟實力，同時視文化與價值為軟實力的工具，¹³ 但就中共而言，經濟應被歸類為硬實力或軟實力之分界卻不明顯。根據李明江研究指出，中共關於軟實力的表述，往往是屬於國內範疇並指涉國內目標，同時也在訴說其「中國發展模式」的經濟成果。¹⁴ 這種敘事心態凸顯中共將經濟資源當成軟實力的來源，而軟實力讓中共在向外界證明其政治模式成功的同時，更傳達其世界觀並讓他國認為北京模式同樣具有競爭力。由此觀之，中共在未來幾年將進一步獲取更多國家對其全球倡議的國際支持，尤其是與美國關係友好的英國、澳洲及加拿大。

This promotion of China's international support base is also most clearly evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. When pandemic outbreaks in Europe and other parts of the world, it embarked on "mask diplomacy" in attempt to convey its narrative of acting as a responsible global stakeholder.¹⁵ Under these auspices, Chinese public and private institutions donated masks, test kits, and other personal protection equipment to some 83 countries hard hit by the coronavirus, including European countries like Italy, Czech Republic, and Serbia, as well as several in the Middle East and Africa. According to Deputy Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui, Beijing had done so because "China empathizes and is willing to offer what we can to countries in need," and that it also wants to share its experience of fighting the pandemic with the rest of the world.¹⁶ This demonstration of solidarity I argue is done with the goal of generating greater international goodwill and to portray China as an exceptional country, and that its political governance is different and better than the West, particularly the United States.

中共在新冠肺炎期間也致力於擴大其國際支持度，當疫情在歐洲及其他地區爆發時，隨即發動「口罩外交」，企圖形塑自己是全球利害關係人的形象。¹⁵ 在國家號召之下，中共的公私機構捐贈口罩、檢測器及其他個人防護裝具給83個遭受病毒肆虐的國家，歐洲地區有義大利、捷克、塞爾維亞，以及中東與非洲地區的許多國家。根據中共

15 讓中共成為負責任利害關係人的理念，參見Hoo, Tiang Boon. *China's Global Identity: Considering the Responsibilities of Great Power*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2018。

16 Zhou, Laura. "Coronavirus: why China's mask diplomacy is raising concerns in the West," *South China Morning Post*, March 28, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3077333/coronavirus-why-chinas-mask-diplomacy-raising-concern-west> (retrieved May 12, 2020).

外交部副部長羅照輝所言，「我們會這麼做是因為重視並願意提供他國所需要的。」於此同時，中共也想要向世界其他國家分享其對抗疫情的經驗。¹⁶ 中共團結一致外援主要是為了營造更大的國際善意，同時形塑中共是一個例外國家，意即其政治治理不同且優於西方國家(尤其是美國)。

Increase International Isolation of Taiwan

三、增強對中華民國的國際孤立

The issue of the Republic of China (Taiwan) remains a core national interest and one which no Chinese leader can be seen to make any compromise over. To this end, under President Xi, China has been highly successful in the past few years. In 2013, Taiwan had official diplomatic relations with 22 UN member states: This number has now dwindled to 15 UN member states, with five losses coming in the past year, and two within a week in September (Solomon Islands and Kiribati). While most of these countries are small Pacific and Oceanic states and are not considered major political players internationally, their strategic locations in key maritime waters proffer Beijing increased opportunities to project international visibility while further eroding Taipei's international presence and voice. In the coming years, it is likely that China will further intensify international pressure on Taiwan.

臺灣議題是中共的核心國家利益之一，沒有一位領導人會對此做出讓步。在此一方面，中共在過去幾年來屢屢打擊中華民國的國際地位，使之邦交國從22個陸續降至15個，甚至僅在2019年9月間的一個禮拜內，索羅門群島與吉里巴斯就先後與中華民國斷交。多數國家都是大太平洋洲島國，儘管在國際上並不具政治份量，但它們重要性在於位處關鍵海域的戰略位置，中共吸納這些國家不僅有助於提升其國際能見度，而且也能進一步打擊中華民國的國際地位與支持。在未來幾年，預判中共將持續在國際上向中華民國施壓。

Indeed the COVID-19 pandemic has generated significant Cross-Straits dynamics suggesting that despite the Chinese government's formidable propaganda machinery, the ROC continues to present a considerable thorn in the flesh of the CCP's international branding and soft power stature. Given this backdrop of diplomatic competition, it was not surprising that both the PRC and ROC governments have been highly sensitive to each other's political maneuvers during the pandemic. This was particularly so given Taipei's considerable efforts and success in combating the virus resulting in international praise and accolades which were sharply contrasted with Beijing's early problems and subsequent criticism by a number of western countries, especially the United States. As one study puts it, the "diplomatic tug of war" pitches both the PRC and ROC in a tussle for recognition as the representative state of "China" in international



society.¹⁷ As such, one might argue that both governments are involved in a "one-up game" of political brinksmanship, each trying to outdo the other in procuring international social capital and the moral high ground to be recognized as a responsible stakeholder. However, there are some subtle differences in each country's diplomatic messaging, as evinced by their subsequent mask diplomacy.

新冠肺炎疫情雖然加劇兩岸關係的競爭，所幸雙方在政治動向上都展現出審慎的態度。中共在持續施展大外宣的同時，臺灣在疫情上良好表現被視為眼中釘，因為打擊了北京當局的國際形象與軟實力地位。中華民國初期在防範新冠肺炎疫情擴散的成功作為，不僅是國際有目共睹，而且也獲得各國讚揚，反觀北京在初期防範的問題及招致許多西方國家(尤其是美國)的批評，兩者形成強烈對比。這種「外交拉鋸戰」已加深兩岸之間的鴻溝；再者，中共向來對國際社會堅持「一中原則」，兩岸終將統一。¹⁷ 如此一來，兩岸將陷入危險政治邊緣情勢，意即各方爭相取勝的賽局，目的是為了爭取國際社會的認同與道德優勢，俾利成為一位負責任的利害關係人。於此同時，兩岸對外所釋出的外交訊息也產生一些微妙分歧，明顯案例是雙方的口罩外交。

In early April the Chinese government offered face masks to Chinese citizens living or working in Singapore, in part to assuage concerns among its citizens there as infections in the city-state witnessed a sharp spike. This was a highly unusual move given that only Chinese citizens were given face masks (as the masks were given out at the Chinese Embassy) and the Chinese Embassy had also activated a number of its organizational contacts in Singapore to help with the mask outreach.¹⁸ In addition, China's Ambassador Hong Xiaoyong also visited institutions with a high enrollment of Chinese students, including both secondary and tertiary schools. Given the lack of local reporting and the absence of official participation on the Singaporean side, one can assume that these actions were done in a private capacity with the tacit acknowledgement of and permission from the Singapore authorities. Shortly after this, Taiwan donated some 100,000 masks to Singapore through its Red Cross as part of Taiwan's Foreign Affairs Ministry initiative to donate 10 million masks worldwide to countries affected by the pandemic. Unlike Beijing's masks, Taipei's donation was not targeted only at its own citizens but at the broader population.¹⁹ While such a donation was not part of any official diplomatic arrangements, the fact

17 Hoo, Tiang Boon and Ardy, Charles. "China and Lilliputians: Small States in a Big Power's Evolving Foreign Policy," *Asian Security*, Vol. 13, No 2 (2017): 116-131, see 125.

18 Sim, Dewey. "Coronavirus: Beijing offers Chinese nationals in Singapore face masks and support amid crisis," *South China Morning Post*, April 9, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/health-environment/article/3079055/coronavirus-beijing-offers-chinese-nationals-singapore> (retrieved May 18, 2020).

19 於下頁。

that the Prime Minister's wife expressed her gratitude to Taiwan on social media suggested that such a move was not purely a private matter, but that it had also received acknowledgement at the highest levels, even though it was not carried by the local mainstream media.²⁰ Two weeks later, China donated 600,000 masks to Singapore, an event which had representatives from both the diplomatic and political communities present.²¹

在2020年4月初，中共政府提供口罩給住在新加坡或在當地工作的公民，部分原因是為了安撫處於疫情高峰期的國人，這是一個不尋常舉動，因為只有大陸公民先獲得口罩(在星國的中國大使館外發放)，儘管中國大使館同時也啟動一連串與星國政府的接觸並協助其獲得口罩。¹⁸ 此外，中共駐新加坡大使洪小勇也走訪大陸學生比例最高的國中與高中(職)學校，儘管缺少當地報導與新加坡官方的參與，研判該活動是以私人名義進行，一定也是得到新加坡當局的默許。隨後，中華民國外交部捐贈新加坡10萬片醫療口罩並由星國紅十字會代表接收，這是臺灣外交部規劃對各國人道援助總計1千萬個口罩的捐贈項目之一。不像中共口罩發放有所分別，中華民國的口罩捐贈並未特別針對其在當地的國人，反而是一般的普羅大眾。¹⁹ 臺灣的口罩捐贈並未有任何官方外交的安排，但星國總理夫人何晶在臉書寫下對臺灣的感謝之意，這意味著此舉動並不是民間事務，而是得到星國最高層的接受與肯定，儘管當地主流媒體對此並不領情。²⁰ 兩個禮拜過後，中共也不甘示弱捐贈60萬片口罩給新加坡並舉行致贈儀式，由雙方政治與外交人員代表出席。²¹

From the above events, I argue that the health pandemic has generated an international competition "to do good" between the PRC and ROC governments. In the case of China however, there exists a more "nationalistic" character to its deeds in which the needs of "Chinese citizens" were accorded greater emphasis and importance compared to other citizens, whereas the Taiwanese government offered its international aid within a more universal, less-selective framework.

從上述口罩事件觀之，筆者認為中共在新冠肺炎期間已形成要比臺灣搶做更多人道

19 Everington, Keoni. "Taiwan's donation of 100,000 masks arrive in Singapore," Taiwan News, April 23, 2020, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3921380> (retrieved May 18, 2020).

20 何晶一得知臺灣捐贈口罩，只先在臉書上留下謎一樣的Errrr...符號，媒體藉此揣測她對臺灣真正感受是不領情，因為臺灣先前曾禁止口罩出口，使生產線設在臺灣的星國口罩供應商無法對本國出口口罩，導致須將生產線移回國內。後來何晶為平息輿論在臉書「Errrr...」發文下做補充，說明本意是代表星國感謝臺灣，並請見諒Errrr語助詞的錯誤！」

21 See, Yong, Clement. "Coronavirus: China donates 600,000 masks to Singapore," Straits Times, May 5, 2020, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/coronavirus-china-donates-600000-masks-to-singapore> (retrieved May 18, 2020).



主義的國際衛生事務之爭。然而，兩者分別在於中共行為存在更多的民族主義特徵，也就是提供大陸公民所需，凸顯比其他國家更重視自己公民，至於臺灣所提供的國際援助，反而是更平等、無分別的對待他人。

How is this significant, and are we reading too much into such diplomatic gestures? The answer is both yes and no. To be fair, given the widespread presence of Chinese citizens it was natural that the Chinese government extended its diplomatic support to them, much in the same way many countries worldwide activated repatriation flights for their citizens during the early stages of the outbreak. But what was notable about the mask diplomacy was its emphasis on "us-them" in its initial outreach, and that Chinese citizens ought to be accorded "special privileges" or were entitled to certain benefits that go beyond what ordinary citizens in their host countries receive. This runs against diplomatic protocol, especially if a country's ambassador is involved and is suggestive of a broader Chinese attempt to generate influence beyond traditional diplomatic channels.²² From this, it can be construed that China's international "good deeds" are framed with a more narrow nationalistic objective in mind with a sharp contrast to the paradigm of "not letting your left hand know what your right hand is doing."²³

口罩捐贈事件重要嗎？本文是否過度解讀上述的外交意涵？答案沒有對或錯，就中共立場而言，由於其公民遍及世界各地，比其他國家更照顧自己公民並無不妥，一如許多國家在疫情爆發初期派遣醫療專機運送物資給其公民。但本文特別要說明的是，中共在疫情爆發初期的口罩外交，讓人強烈感受到「非我族類」之分別，只要是大陸公民就有特權可以獲得特定好處，至於地主國公民則無法獲得，這明顯違反外交禮節，特別是一國的大使還涉入其中，這也讓人聯想中共試著在傳統外交管道外施展更大的影響力。²² 由此觀之，中共的國際善行可以理解為基於民族主義的狹隘心態，這種行為還要大鳴大放，深怕不為人知。²³

22 To this end, Singapore former top diplomat Bilahari Kausikan had highlighted against Beijing's attempts to impose its own state identity on Singapore including the use of information campaigns/operations to influence the Singapore identity. 關於這點，新加坡前高階外交官考斯甘強調要對抗中共向新加坡施加的國家認同，因為中共使用資訊影響力行動來影響星國人民的認同，參見Kausikan, Bilahari. *China is Messing with Your Mind*. Singapore: Epigram Books, 2019。

23 Certainly a cynic could still insist that everything in international politics is rationally calculated and designed to serve a political purpose. I suppose this argument can be maintained and I do not disagree. However just because one might envisage a political objective in certain actions does not mean that all diplomatic actions are equally narrowly defined. 儘管犬儒學派之徒仍強調國際政治的每件事都是經過合理算計並服膺於政治目的，但本文對這個主張持保留看法，因為我們可以說特定活動是為了政治目的，但不代表所有外交活動也僅侷限於政治目的。

Furthermore these actions are trained predominantly for a domestic audience, more so than the ROC, especially given the fact that many Chinese people. As observed by Singapore's Kausikan, "understood their leaders had bungled the initial response to the outbreak in Wuhan [and] that the people bore the brunt of the mistakes and the drastic responses needed to recover from them." Furthermore, "tightened censorship and the laudatory tone describing President Xi Jinping's role in the people's struggle against COVID-19 suggests that the CCP is still insecure that it has put its mistakes to rest."²⁴ To this end, I argue that the diplomatic efforts made by the Chinese government to showcase its contributions overseas are reflective of the attempt by the CCP to reframe the domestic narrative of the outbreak and to emphasize the Chinese state's sparing no efforts to protect the well-being of its citizens.

再者，這些是要特地做給國內人民看的，許多人民認為是要凸顯做得比臺灣還多。誠如新加坡前常駐聯合國代表考斯甘之見解，「由於領導高層對於在武漢爆發的新冠肺炎疫情處理不當，導致人民首當其衝身陷其害，因此需要有力的因應措施來挽救人民的信任。」再者，嚴厲的言論審查制度以及讚美習近平與人民一同對抗新冠肺炎的形象，在在顯示黨中央的不安全感，同時也企圖規避犯錯所需承擔的責任。²⁴ 由此觀之，本文認為中共海外國家所做的外交作為與貢獻，反映出其試著要重塑疫情初期的國內言論與觀感，也是要展現政府不遺餘力保護人民的福祉。

Negate U.S. Influence in East Asia

四、抵銷美國在東亞的影響力

In the minds of many Chinese leaders and political observers, the presence of the United States in East Asia remains the biggest obstacle to China's future prosperity and ability to project power regionally and internationally. According to Aaron Friedberg, the ultimate aim of Chinese policymakers is to win without fighting and to displace the United States as the leading power in Asia while avoiding direct confrontation.²⁵ Indeed it has been pointed out that part of China's assertive international behavior is due in part as a result of the United States' "pivot to Asia" strategy begun during the Obama administration, which in the eyes of Chinese observers represents a fundamental decision by Washington policymakers to contain China in order to preserve U.S. international primacy and global leadership.²⁶ Likewise the idea of a "free and open Indo-Pacific"

24 Kausikan, Bilahari. "No, China will not get away with rewriting history," Nikkei Asian Review, March 30, 2020, <http://asia.nikkei.com/remotexs.ntu.edu.sg/Opinion/No-China-will-not-get-away-with-rewritinghistory> (retrieved May 19, 2020).

25 Friedberg, Aaron L. A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia First edition New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2011.

26 於下頁。



is also viewed by the Chinese as a means to contain China's development and ensure American international dominance.²⁷ Indeed Chinese paranoia towards the United States has intensified over the past five years, particularly following the 2017 publication of the National Security Strategy of the United States and the 2018 National Defense Strategy, both of which singled out China as America's primary strategic competitor. As a response the 2019 Chinese White Paper summarized the overall character of the U.S. defense efforts by declaring that International strategic competition is on the rise. The US has adjusted its national security and defense strategies, and adopted unilateral policies. It has provoked and intensified competition among major countries, significantly increased its defense expenditure, pushed for additional capacity in nuclear, outer space, cyber and missile defense, and undermined global strategic stability. NATO has continued its enlargement, stepped up military deployment in Central and Eastern Europe, and conducted frequent military exercises.²⁸

中共領導階層與一些政治家認為，美國在東亞的駐留仍是中共未來發展的最大阻礙，不利於其向區域或國際擴展勢力。根據美國政治學家范亞倫(Aaron Friedberg)所言，「中共決策者的最終目標是不戰而屈人之兵，也就是用避免直接衝突方式，進而取代美國在亞洲的領導地位。」²⁵ 這個觀點可以說明中共在國際上的強勢行為，有部分是因為美國自歐巴馬政府所推行的「亞洲再平衡」戰略。在「中」方觀察家的眼中，該戰略根本是華府決策者用來圍堵中共的方法，旨在維持美國國際優勢與全球領導地位。²⁶ 如美國所推出「自由開放的印太」理念，同樣也被一些「中」方人士視為是遏制中共發展的方法，同時也是為了確保美國的國際主導權。²⁷ 中共對於美國的不良觀感在過去5年來已急遽惡化，尤其是美國「2017年國家安全戰略」與「2018年國防戰略」報告之頒布，兩份文件內容直指中共是美國的主要戰略競爭者。作為回應美國的國防論述，中共在2019年《新時代的中國國防》白皮書中批評美國加劇競爭態勢：「國際戰

26 Zheng, Yongnian, Chen, Gang and Lye, Liang Fook. *China's Foreign Policy in 2012 : Responding to the US Pivot to Asia and Territorial Disputes with Neighbours*. Singapore: East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore, 2012; Zhou, Fangyin. "Between Assertiveness and Self-Restraint: Understanding China's South China Sea policy," *International Affairs* Vol. 92, No. 4 (July 1, 2016): 869-890; Zhu, Zhiquan. *The US "Pivot" to Asia and Its Impact on US-China Relations*. Singapore: East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore, 2012.

27 Chen, Fangming. "Reviewing the Indo-Pacific strategy of the Trump administration," *International Strategic Studies*, Vol. 132, No.1 (March 2019): 114-123; see also, He, Kai and Li, Mingjiang. "Understanding the dynamics of the Indo-Pacific: US-China strategic competition, regional actors, and beyond," *International Affairs* Vol. 96, Iss. 1 (2020): 1-7.

28 The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. *China's National Defense in a New Era*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2019, p. 3.

略競爭呈上升之勢。美國調整國家安全戰略和國防戰略，奉行單邊主義政策，挑起和加劇大國競爭，大幅增加軍費投入，加快提升核子、太空、網路、飛彈防禦等領域，損害全球戰略穩定。北約持續擴員，加強在中東歐地區軍事部署，頻繁舉行軍事演習。」²⁸

From the above, China perceives a post COVID-19 world as one which will witness a shift in international power away from the West and the United States to Asia, in which China is well-placed to assume a prominent position. To be certain this idea was already in circulation among Chinese policy circles, given President Xi's exhortation in 2014 of an "Asia for Asians" security cooperation structure,²⁹ and popular iterations by a number of global public intellectuals, such as Hugh White's *The China Choice* (2013), and more notably former Singapore diplomat Kishore Mahbubani's books *Has the West Lost It* (2018) and *Has China Won* (2020). In fact, what all these works hint at is that leaders and policymakers should be prepared to confront a new international reality wherein American primacy is substantially diminished and China's influence increased.

中共認為一個後新冠肺炎世界，將見證國際權力從西方轉移至亞洲，並應主動承接領導者角色。自習近平在2014年提出的亞洲安全觀：亞洲人的事，由亞洲人自己解決，²⁹ 這種想法已經圍繞在中共及全球的學術圈。至於全球一些知名學者也在其著作中提及此種認知，如澳洲國立大學戰研所教授休·懷特在2013年出版《中國抉擇》；新加坡前駐聯合國大使馬凱碩在2018年出版《西方迷失了嗎？》及2020年出版《中國贏了嗎？》。此外，這些著作內容不約而同都向領導者與決策者暗示，要準備好迎接一個新的國際現實，也就是美國領導權逐漸衰弱，中共影響力漸增。

As such, it is likely that China would continue to take steps, militarily, economically and politically to further erode American presence in East Asia and Southeast Asia. All these would have significant repercussions for countries in the region, particularly in Southeast Asia where member states have traditionally practiced strategic hedging as a middle ground to navigate the complexities of great power competition between China and the United States. As observed by one Malaysian analyst of China's regional actions, "indeed, China's increasingly multifaceted maritime opportunism and coercive presence in the disputed waters of the South China Sea, even during the coronavirus crisis, has further deepened the weaker states' suspicions of its long-term intentions. Its increasing use of coercive means to prevent and obstruct the claimant countries' oil and gas exploration activities, together with the lack of progress on the COC (Code of Conduct) after

29 Jakobson, Linda. "Reflections from China on Xi Jinping's 'Asia for Asians'," *Asian Politics & Policy* Vol. 8, No. 1 (2016): 219-223.



years-long talks, further frustrated the smaller states in the region."³⁰ In other words, China's current course of actions is likely to aggravate smaller countries in Southeast Asia, a number of which are likely to pursue other institutional mechanisms with or without the United States to safeguard their interests that are seen to be threatened by a more assertive Chinese posture.

就此一趨勢而言，中共將持續採取政治、經濟及軍事措施，進一步破壞美國在東亞及東南亞的駐留。美、「中」競爭格局將影響區域內的國家，尤其是東南亞國家為了避免捲入大國競爭，一般都採取「戰略避險」的中庸之道，避免在兩邊選邊站。誠如某位觀察中共區域行動的馬來西亞分析師所言，「中共多面向的海洋投機主義與在南海爭端海域的威懾駐留，甚至在新冠肺炎危機期間，周邊弱小國家對中共長期意圖之猜忌不減反增。中共不斷使用威懾手段來防範並阻擋聲索國的石油與天然氣探勘活動，再加上《南海行為準則》多年來進展付之闕如，這使區域弱小國家更充滿無力感。」³⁰ 由此觀之，中共未來行動路線仍會採取威脅與挑釁的姿態，這將使東南亞一些弱小國家為了捍衛自身利益，轉而與美國或他國尋求建立制度性保護機制。

Global Rules and International Order

五、全球規則與國際秩序

It is generally perceived by Chinese leaders and political observers that the rules of the international order were made so as to preserve the interests of the West.³¹ Given the ongoing and lively debate among western scholars over the sustainability and longevity of the existing liberal global order,³² the search for alternative arrangements and theoretical frameworks to account for

30 Kuik, Cheng-Chwee. "Hedging in post-pandemic Asia: What, How, and Why?" The Asan Forum, June 6, 2020, <http://www.theasanforum.org/hedging-in-postpandemic-asia-what-how-and-why/> (retrieved June 18, 2020). 近期中共與東南亞國家關係的討論，參見Choong, William. "Smaller countries in the Asia-Pacific: Mired in the Middling Middle," ISEAS Commentary 2020/90, July 3, 2020, <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/media/commentaries/smaller-countries-in-the-asia-pacific-mired-in-themiddling-middle/> (retrieved July 7, 2020); Marston, Hunter. "The COVID-19 pandemic pulls at the seams of Southeast Asia," East Asia Forum, May 9, 2020, <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2020/05/09/the-COVID-19-pandemic-pulls-at-the-seams-of-southeast-asia/> (retrieved July 7, 2020)。

31 Deng, Yong. "Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U.S. Global Strategy," Political Science Quarterly Vol. 116, No. 3 (September 22, 2001): 343-365; Yan, Xuotong. "Chinese values vs. liberalism: what ideology will shape the international normative order," Chinese Journal of International Politics, Vol. 11, No.1, Spring (2018): 1-22.

32 See, Ikenberry, G. John and Leviathan, Liberal. The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011, and Mearsheimer, John J. The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018 for two contrasting visions.

changes in the international system has been an intellectual holy grail of sorts for international relations scholars, both in and outside the West.³³

中共領導階層與一些政治家普遍認為，西方國家所制定的國際秩序規則都是本於私利。³¹ 在當前國際情勢變化下，現有的自由全球秩序之存續性與長久性，已在西方學者圈內掀起辯論，³² 因此尋求替代方案以及與時俱進的國際體系理論架構，便被國際關係學者(西方或非西方)視為是知識分子的神聖使命。³³

From this vantage point, China is seen as being the flag-bearer of such a new system and one which possesses the deepest resources with which to challenge American dominance. Indeed, China's presence is ubiquitous in most if not all major global institutions and forums and Chinese representatives are now far more vocal in stating and arguing Chinese demands and interests where they arise. Furthermore, as exemplified by President Xi's proclamation of the Chinese dream and his vision of the rejuvenation of China, a far more confident China is now being portrayed on the international stage as compared to the past.

中共無疑被視為是這套新體系的最佳代表，其擁有足夠資源能挑戰美國的主導權。的確，中共勢力已遍布大部分全球組織與各大小論壇，而且中共官方代表也更有自信提出要求與捍衛自身利益。這種趨勢來自於習近平主政後所提出關於實現中華民族偉大復興的「中國夢」，意在使中共在國際舞臺上展現更大的自信心，這有別於過往內斂的領導風格。

As such, it is likely that we will see in the coming years greater efforts by Chinese leaders and policymakers to shape international discourse about the overall distribution of global power and the rules of international order, including more assertive behavior in its foreign policy. As observed by a number of international scholars, the past decade has witnessed considerable Chinese intransigence on what it deems its core national interests, particularly in matters relating to territorial sovereignty as well as having greater say regarding the global order.³⁴ Indeed, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi describes China's global role as one of being a "participant, facilitator

33 Some examples include Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, Chih-yu Shih and Qin Yaqing. See, Acharya, Amitav. *The End of American World Order* Second edition. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018; Behera, Navnita Chadha., Acharya, Amitav and Buzan, Barry. "Looking for 'the International' Beyond the West," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 5, July, 2010, 817-828; Shih, Chih-yu. *Sinicizing International Relations: Self, Civilization, and Intellectual Politics in Subaltern East Asia* First edition. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Qin, Yaqing. *A Relational Theory of World Politics* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

34 於下頁。



and contributor,"³⁵ while Yan Xuetong writes of China as moving "from keeping a low profile to striving for achievement."³⁶

可以想見，中共領導高層未來幾年將致力於掌控全球權力分配的國際話語權，以及國際秩序的規則制定，在外交政策上則只會更為強勢而已。誠如一些國際學者的觀察，過去十年已見證中共對於自身核心國家利益堅持不妥協的態度，尤其是關於領土主權以及更多對全球秩序的參與。³⁴ 至於中共內部人士也持應有所作為的態度，如外交部長王毅認為，「中共的全球角色應是參與者、促進者及貢獻者。」³⁵ 知名重量級學者閻學通則認為，「中共要揚棄韜光養晦，轉型成奮發有為。」³⁶

In a study of the Chinese vision of international order, Wu Xinbo suggests that what China aspires to is a liberal partnership order including emphasizing a series of ideas such as openness, inclusiveness, cooperation, diversity, equality, multilateral institutions and rules.³⁷ Ironically, these ideas suggested by Wu are precisely the same characteristics that are often held up to be an indicator of a liberal state. If so, it would seem that China, at least where its foreign policy is concerned, seeks to affiliate itself with patterns of international liberalism while retaining an illiberal edge to its domestic governance.³⁸ The COVID-19 pandemic will have further convinced the Chinese government that "liberalism abroad and illiberalism at home" is the means to success in international politics. Put in practical terms, this would mean that the Chinese government is likely to express enthusiasm for international initiatives and global actions so long as these are not seen to impinge directly on its domestic front behind which it seeks to exercise absolute sovereignty. This is seen as a "win-win" situation for it allows the Chinese government the opportunity to obtain

34 Friedberg, Aaron L. *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* First edition New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2011; Liao, Nien-Chung Chang. "The Sources of China's Assertiveness: The System, Domestic Politics or Leadership Preferences?," *International Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 4 (2016): 817-833; He, Kai, and Feng, Huiyun. "Debating China's Assertiveness: Taking China's Power and Interests Seriously," *International Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 5 (2012): 633-644.

35 Wang, Yi. "China's role in the global and regional order: participant, facilitator and contributor," speech at Fourth World Peace Forum, Beijing, June 27, 2015, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/2461_663310/t1276595.shtml (retrieved January 15, 2020).

36 Yan, Xuetong. "From keeping a low profile to striving for achievement," *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2014): 153-184.

37 Wu, Xinbo. "China in Search of a Liberal Partnership International Order," *International Affairs*, Vol. 94, No. 5 (2018): 995-1018, see 1007.

38 關於自由國際主義的深度分析，參見Beate, Jahn. "Liberal internationalism: historical trajectory and current prospects," *International Affairs*, Vol. 94, No. 1 (2018): 43-61.

skills and the technical know-how to further strengthen its domestic governance while at the same time ensuring that it is able to limit external threats to its political rule and to demonize those it views as hostile threats.

復旦大學吳心伯教授在研究中共國際秩序願景方面指出，中共嚮往自由夥伴的秩序，並強調開放、兼容、合作、多樣、平等，以及多邊制度與規則等理念。³⁷ 然諷刺的是，吳教授所凸顯的這些理念卻是自由主義國家的指標。依此看來，中共的模式是在對外政策上讓自己接受國際自由主義，但在國內治理上卻仍採取不自由的管控模式。³⁸ 在新冠肺炎期間，中共更確信「在海外採自由主義，在國內採不自由主義」的手段，一定能在國際政治獲致成功。中共的思維是熱衷從事國際倡議與全球活動，並不會直接衝擊其在國內的「一黨專制」政體。這種模式對中共是雙贏的，因為讓北京當局有機會從中獲得一些技巧與訣竅，進一步強化國內治理能力，不僅能遏止外部威脅涉入政治統治，而且也能將具敵意的威脅者妖魔化。

China's criticism of the United States during the pandemic includes a not-too-subtle dig at the American political system as a failure for its inability to control the virus spread within the United States, and consequently to be blamed for the worldwide explosion of the virus transmission. In a May 2020 Global Times article, it was said that, "Washington is widely believed to have failed its own people and the world as the country has about 4 percent of the global population, but now accounts for one-third of all cases worldwide and nearly 30 percent of the overall death toll."³⁹ This scapegoating of the United States reflects a popular mindset at work in Chinese political circles, that the West is culpable for the problems of the world, while China has its own domestic problems, it is attempting to do good and thus ought to be acknowledged by the world as such.

中共在新冠肺炎期間嚴加批評美國的政治體制，認為其無法管控國內疫情，還讓病毒擴散至世界各地。根據2020年5月《環球時報》文章指出，華府幾乎已經不被人民所信任，這個占有世界人口數4%的美國，至今已統計出占世界確診案例的1/3，同時有將近三成的死亡率。³⁹ 這種拿美國當代罪羔羊的作法是中共政治圈普遍心態，意在凸顯西方國家同樣因為這些世界性問題備受譴責，儘管中共也有其國內問題，但卻試著協助他人，因此值得受到世界肯定。

Conclusion

結論

39 Chen, Qingqing and Leng, Shumei. "US owes world an explanation on COVID-19," Global Times, May 6, 2020, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1187598.shtml> (retrieved June 19, 2020).



Many scholars are raising the specter of what a post COVID-19 future will be like. Related to this is the question of China's global influence and the extent to which the pandemic has amplified or diminished Beijing's international standing. As this article has argued, these five objectives constituted core elements of China's grand strategy are likely to be pursued, and with greater determination particularly given the sense of crisis engendered within the CCP as a result of the global pandemic. To this end, I argue that out of the above five objectives, it is likely that the Chinese government will be most sensitive to those which it considers as challenging its domestic stability and political legitimacy. The centrality of the CCP must remain paramount and any from domestic sources or from outside China attempt to challenge or modify this will result in a strong Chinese political response. At the same time, given the challenges faced by many western countries particularly the United States during the ongoing pandemic, the possibility of shifting postures towards China in a post-pandemic world (when that happens) cannot be ruled out. As such, one might argue that the Chinese government might adjust its policies in response to how other countries react, so long as they do not impinge on its domestic control.

許多學者不斷探究中共在後新冠肺炎世界，主要問題圍繞在中共全球影響力的發展，意即此波疫情到底是強化或是減弱其國際勢力。本文提出5個主題論述是中共大戰略下持續追求的核心目標，同時由於全球化疫情效應將使北京當局充滿危機，促使其果斷追求這些目標。此外，對於挑戰中共國內穩定及政治合法性的人事物，都將觸動其敏感神經。「一黨專制」仍將是主體，任何對其挑戰或企圖修改政權的國內外勢力，都將引起北京當局強烈回應。於此同時，鑒於西方許多國家在疫情期間所面臨的挑戰，在後新冠肺炎世界或許有一些國家會轉變對中共的強硬態度，只要它們不去過問中共國內事務，中共可能會根據對方善意而調整對外政策。

As recent examples of China's wolf diplomacy have illustrated, China's political leaders and the foreign policy community perceive a heightened western united front to undermine China's political system and constrain Beijing's rise. As a result, over the next one to three years, barring any political upheaval within the CCP—we are likely to see a hardening of Beijing's resolve in its international behavior and the development of a siege mentality in response to the West. This would result in greater assertiveness in China's international posture, particularly in issues that it considers as core interests, such as territorial matters and the CCP's political rule. Already the Chinese government has demonstrated its willingness to sustain its diplomatic offensive amidst the coronavirus pandemic, as evidenced by its decision to enact the Hong Kong national security law, clashing with India over border disputes, and challenging other claimant states in the South China Sea. Consequently, China is unlikely to acquiesce to any external threats and challenges posed by other countries. Any attempt to make some sort of diplomatic bargain with Beijing will be on Chinese terms and from a Chinese position of strength. Will it succeed in doing so, and are

we to expect countries to play exactly the way Beijing wants? In the author's view, this is not a given, particularly if the Chinese authoritarian system continues to be perceived as an unattractive model of political governance. Moreover, China's domestic institutions and internal political dynamics will also pose problems for the Chinese government, especially if the COVID-19 pandemic results in a sustained economic downturn, thus undermining the CCP's fragile social compact with its people.⁴⁰ All these would have significant repercussions for China's international and domestic politics. In a post COVID-19 era, as China continues to seek greater prestige, status, and influence on the world stage, it is also likely to be more paranoid, sensitive, and susceptible to external forces on its domestic front.

誠如近期案例顯示，中共的戰狼外交之產生，是因為中共政治與外交圈的領導高層認為西方國家沆瀣一氣破壞中共政治體制及其崛起。因此，未來1~3年，我們將看到中共在國際行為上的強硬決心，同時陷入以為西方國家對己存有敵意的「自以為是的心態」。中共將反映出更強勢的國際姿態，尤其是在其視為核心利益的議題，如領土爭端與政權統治。中共在新冠肺炎期間已展現其外交的強硬手段，如強制通過香港的國安法、與印度爆發邊界爭端衝突，以及挑戰在南海的聲索國。由此可見，中共不可能姑息任何外部威脅者及其他國家所構成的挑戰，任何在外交上討價還價的國家，都將敵不過中共的談判與強硬立場。如果各個國家真的屈服於中共，那它們會按中共的意思行事嗎？本文認為這並不盡然，因為中共威權政體仍是為人借鑒的政治治理模式。再者，中共國內各機關與內部政治動態也將對政權構成問題，特別是新冠肺炎將導致持續性經濟衰退，進而破壞共黨與人民本來就脆弱的社會契約。⁴⁰ 這些都會對中共國際政治與國內政治造成重大衝擊。在後新冠肺炎的時代，可以看見中共持續尋求更高的聲望、地位及影響力，中共對於外部勢力干涉內部事務方面，也會變成更偏執、敏感及猜疑。

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40 See for instance, Shirk, Susan L. *China Fragile Superpower*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.